

LOUISIANA COASTAL AREA  
COMPREHENSIVE COASTWIDE ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECT  
(LCA)  
(Implementation of Coast 2050 Plan)  
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND OUTREACH  
FEBRUARY 4, 2003 PUBLIC MEETING  
BELLE CHASSE MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM  
BELLE CHASSE, LOUISIANA

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The transcript of the Community Participation and Outreach public meeting, before Dorothy N. Gros, Certified Court Reporter, reported at Belle Chasse Municipal Auditorium, 8398 Highway 23, Belle Chasse, Louisiana, on Tuesday, February 4, 2003, beginning at 6:35 p.m.

(Whereupon, the meeting was called to order, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of

silent prayer was held for the Space Shuttle Columbia crew members and their families.)

BENNY ROUSELLE:

Thank you. At this time I have been asked to host the meeting and I guess that's because we're in Plaquemines Parish and so at this time I'd like to welcome all of you here, public officials, the Corps of Engineer folks, all the agencies here are represented tonight. It's something that when they called me and asked me to host this meeting I had reservations about because I have been disenchanted with the process so to speak and I have a few comments to say but I'm going to reserve those comments maybe for the citizens' comments portion of the meeting. But, at this time my understanding of this meeting is to try to re-engage the public into the process which I hope they are successful in re-engaging you and I challenge them to re-engage me because I have been to the point of complete frustration with the coastal restoration efforts in this state and I have conveyed this to my councilmen and I more than anxious to convey it to other people and until we do something different here we are spinning our wheels and I believe that hopefully this meeting can put your input into the process that will improve the system. I've been around here for several years. I have seen these focus studies and

make lists and go on with more studies and make more lists and I am tired of the lists and I am tired of the studies and I can tell you that if we do not address the problem to the community and to the people in this parish, the Barataria Basin, where we lose the most is a problem and until we address it with more constructive projects and a serious effort to restore the coastlines we can push as much water as we want down the basin and still lose the battle because we had an experience with the drought situation when we had the marsh die back, we lost that effort we started over and without getting too worked up on this issue I'm going to go ahead and introduce the facilitator cause I don't want to go any further with this subject.

It's a pleasure for me to introduce tonight the facilitator Ms. Robin Dunkin. For the past three years Ms. Robin Dunkin worked for the office of Universal Relations at L.S.U. As a Senior Marketing Coordinator Ms. Dunkin was responsible for marketing and the academic research activities of L.S.U. Before L.S.U., Ms. Dunkin worked for a large industrial company based in Baton Rouge. Ms. Dunkin is currently working on her master's degree in organization and communication for L.S.U. At this time, it's a pleasure to introduce Ms. Dunkin.

ROBIN DUNKIN:

Thank you President Rouselle for that introduction. I hope tonight we're going to be able to inform all of you and kind of calm some of your fears. I think this group has a lot to offer tonight and a lot to say tonight, so I hope that we can answer everyone's questions and hear as many comments as we possibly can.

Again, my name is Robin Dunkin. I do work with the Office of University Relations at L.S.U. Tonight we're going to follow a very simple agenda and there is plenty of time for audience participation. The first thing we're going to do is see a presentation from Jon Porthouse here who is one of the senior project managers of the Department of Natural Resources. Once his presentation concludes then we are going to have thirty minutes for public questions and comments at that point. After those thirty minutes we're going to turn the mike over to Sue Hawes with the Army Corps of Engineers and we'll do the same thing again after that. We'll have thirty minutes of public questions and comments.

My job as a facilitator is to keep this thing running and running on time. So I might have to be kind of a time Nazi and I might have to cut people off in order for us to stay on the agenda. That's very important that we stay on the agenda. I just have a couple of ground rules. It's very simple

and easy for everyone to remember. One is that if you do want to make a comment or ask a question please come to the mike here in the center of the room. That way everyone can hear the question and the comment. I ask that you please give your name and your affiliation and if you'd like to you can tell us the area where you come from. I'm asking that you do one question at a time. We have a really good turn-out this evening. Many of you have multiple questions but I ask that you please do it one at a time so everyone has an opportunity to ask a question. These folks are not leaving here tonight until they conclude with your questions. So even if you have to ask at the end, if you have to come up and personally talk to Jon and Sue, they plan on staying here until they can answer all your questions. So please don't be offended if I cut you off with one question and if we still have time at the end you're welcome to get back in the line and come back up and ask that second question. But, let's get everybody's question first. Also, I'm going to, if you have just a comment I'd like you to keep your comment less than a minute. Again, same rule, it's just so everybody can have an opportunity to comment and ask a question. So this is going to be very informative. I think it's going to be very helpful to all of you. I'm very pleased with the turn out.

This is a great comment.

So on behalf of the Office of the Governor and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources and the Army Corps of Engineers, we're so happy that you're here tonight and we're very excited about presenting what you are about to see. I'm going to turn it over to Jon Porthouse who is with the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources and he's going to start us off.

(Whereupon, a presentation by Jon Porthouse is made off the record.)

ROBIN DUNKIN: At this point we're going to go into the thirty minute question and comment. So if you would like to make a question or a comment, the mike is here in the center of the room. Jon will be answering many of your questions.

We're going to start off with some of the questions here on these cards. You may please start to line up if you'd like. Remember, your name, your affiliation and we'd really like to know where you're from.

MARK DAVIS:

Mark Davis, Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana. I live in New Orleans, based in Baton Rouge. First of all I would like to thank you for holding this meeting. It's important to notify people of this meeting and where we are. I also

think it's also important to put up the history of how we got here. Take note that public involvement got us through almost everyone of those steps. This is not new. In fact, what we need to do is make sure we learn and engage the public of what we got. The Public Participation Plan that you present tonight is I think is a good beginning, but I don't believe it is adequately task. I think that there are significant segments of the public that do not come to these meetings that are not in south Louisiana and it's not really an adequate plan to ask family and friends to recruit them. We know that if you do not specifically reach out to the constituents such as navigation, oil and gas, natural environmental, you know, upriver safety have plans for the Mississippi River affect us. If we do not include them specifically in the total involvement of the plan, they won't be there when we need them and they won't be prepared for us and I believe that is inadequate to have a public involvement when this focus large town meetings in towns in south Louisiana without a more strategic process.

ROBIN DUNKIN:

Jon would you like to comment?

JON PORTHOUSE:

I appreciate that comment and one of the things that we're trying to do is make sure we did

not leave those people out. We are trying to make sure we take business -- We are also implementing other issues, other ways of reaching those people.

ROBERT SABATE':

Bob Sabate', geologist. I live across the river where you folks over here call it the eastbank.

There are millions of faults in the Gulf Coast. The geology fault in which the fault is breaking the earth. Mostly very very equally marked. (Inaudible) At the same time what is normally interfering with the marsh in coastal Louisiana (Inaudible) I studied the seismic data in several regions. The seismic data and in all these cases without exception some heat fault was seen all the way up to the service. In all but one case the fault coincided with the Northern shore, the lakes. What happens is the fault drops, the land slides and a lot of water comes in. This process questions the projects (Inaudible)

JON PORTHOUSE:

I'd like to address that a little bit. We do recognize the faults that are out there. In fact our understanding of what causes faults is increase of (Inaudible). We are trying to address that post 2004 with support groups. We're addressing that as we can. I believe the Corps of Engineers has recently contracted (Inaudible)

PAUL ANGRISANA:



Good evening. I'm a director of TV shows that airs on PBS. Do you have footage that depicts the story you're trying to tell? If you have a story that you want to tell on PBS stations, I would be happy to run them.

JON PORTHOUSE:

We do have a lot of footage, aerial footage, and we take pictures of these things so we do have pictures available. We have recently received some national attention of the coastline land loss problem on PBS. So we're beginning to get that slowly. We also, one of the things I did not mention we have a campaign called (Inaudible) Wetland. One of the efforts for that campaign is to do what you just mentioned. Get footage out there, get the exposure. Karl Rodriguez can answer your specific questions on that.

TRACEY MITCHELL:

Good evening, I'm Tracey Mitchell and I represent the Louisiana Seafood Promotion Board, we track the return on the Louisiana oyster task force.

I'd like to say that Louisiana is the number 1 producer of oysters in the United States and Plaquemines Parish is definitely by far in the parish number one producing oysters. I just want to make a comment that there's a state law that requires a relocation for our oyster beds where funding is

available and I'm sure everyone can agree that it's a lot less expensive to relocate these folks than to end up in court with all these lawsuits. So just remember our oysterman as we go through this process and I do feel it's very important. Thank you.

SUE HAWES:

The state is working on a fair way to see that our oysterman get relocated or bought out.

DAN ARCENEUX:

Dan Arceneaux, Chairman of Coastal Zoning Advisory Committee in St. Bernard Parish. Volunteer.

I've been affiliated with the design program since it's conception. (Inaudible) We insist on dredging 6'. (Inaudible) The next natural disaster if a hurricane happens to come up that side like Betsy did, would probably drown everyone in New Orleans and St. Bernard Parish. We need to do something now to stop it now. Thank you.

WOODY CRUZ: (phonetic)

Chairman of the Jefferson Parish (Inaudible) and a member of the coalition. I have no question but a comment if I may. I've been involved with the 2050 since square one and this process which it is going to be a great more expansive than the 2050 process. Most of us here have a baseline understanding of what the plans are. If the plans change or elements of the plans change we need to see

how they change from what they were to what they are going to be. (Inaudible)

JON PORTHOUSE:

(Inaudible due to planes flying over.)

KERRY ST. PE:

Hello, my name is Kerry St. Pe. I just wanted to respond to one of the previous questions and mention if anyone wants to see any of this information it's all free. If they would call our office, our phone number is 1-800-259-0869 or see Ms. Leslie McVay, she's here in the back. Just give her your name and she will be glad to send you material.

We produced five videos for the express purpose of telling what our story is. Our story is we are going to lose our home, literally. We've produced videos, CD's, posters, all sorts of materials and we'd be glad to send you this free. I just want to mention also that you are in the Barataria/Terrebonne natural estuary. You are on the Barataria side and I'm proud to say that many of these people here in this room are a part of our program including Plaquemine Parish representatives. So, please call us. We'd be glad to send you the materials. Thank you.

ROBIN DUNKIN:

Okay, we still have time for some more questions.

TOM HARRINGTON: I'm Tom Harrington, Department U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, also a consultant of Region Planning Commission here in Plaquemines Parish. I've been active from the beginning of the 2050 and helped with the formation of the coastal zoning group here in Plaquemines Parish. I would tell you that everything that was done in Coast 2050 was done in very very great detail and it is the plan which is (Inaudible). I would also appeal to those who are in this audience since the Corps of Engineers is here can do anything about my next subject. Those in the State of Louisiana, those in local government and those of us who are citizens can do that and that is to contact our congressional delegation concerning the funding and our anxiety over our situation. Mary Landrieu has been very very instrumental in pushing legislation for increase funding. One of the actions of which this level organization currently works is called the Breaux Bill. But that is only a drop in the bucket as to addressing the situation and just recently we had an article about some ships to be used on the Louisiana coastline and those were contaminating ships and there was a (Inaudible). Coast 2050, I had proposed and still proposed the use of barge barrier specifically designed, specifically shaped to reduce the wave action hitting the shore and I know that it would be greatly impossible for us

to fund that for the entire Louisiana coast and I believe that it can be done on a movable basis. There's some of us in this room that know there were some run-away barges at Port Fouchon and they stayed there for some time and behind those barges you can see the impact of the coast of the waves against and there were some improvements in that marsh and I certainly believe that our servicemen could use concrete docks and is certainly worthy of consideration once again. Thank you.

BENNY ROUSELLE:

My question basically is the Corps or through all of your efforts come to any conclusions that pushing a lot of fresh water into the basins, I won't say exactly where, do you believe that pushing all this water will do any good prior to restoring the shoreline?

JON PORTHOUSE:

Obviously, I'm not with the Corps but I think I can answer that question. (Inaudible) But yes, there is evidence that shows that you can build levees without barrier shoreline in some instances. We are also looking at a barrier shorelines (Inaudible) all by itself. It helps to have a barrier shoreline but it's not necessary, you don't necessarily have to have.

BENNY ROUSELLE:

And as a follow-up, did you look at what was lost during the drought period when the Gulf came back and didn't die off the marsh, as to how long it took to build that marsh and what you lost and how long it would take to replace it?

JON PORTHOUSE:

I'm not aware of the specifics but there is a report (Inaudible).

BENNY ROUSELLE:

And to close, I believe and many people in this parish believe that you can flush all the fresh water you want down this basin, if you do not have something to hold water back and stop the Gulf from coming in you will get nowhere.

HENRY RODRIGUEZ:

Henry Rodriguez, Councilman-at-Large, St. Bernard Parish. I just have one question for you. I've been in office for 27 years. I weighed 190 lbs. and my hair was black when I started. I've been to more meetings about closing the Gulf outlet, restoring our coastline. If I would get a bucket of sand every time I went, I could do it for them. If I took all these studies that you made, just the paper, we could restore our coastline. We got big ideas and Lord knows you got a lot of people down there. Just look around. Some of them are here to protect their

own interest. The oyster fisherman are concerned about their problems and they have a right to be. The state's in good shape. Our land grows, the state leases it to oyster fisherman. They collect your taxes. They lease it to the oil company, they collect that. We got a lot of problems out there and nothing's right. I don't think any of us have all the answers. Listening to you, I don't think you have the answers. I just don't want you to think -- You know, Benny and I -- You're just one group after another. You've got a funding source. Fours years later a new guy comes in and says we're going to do this. It just seem a repetition of the same things over and over. I hear the same things over and over, you know. 2050 program. It's the same program. We got all these experts and we still are losing land and we got all these studies and nobody is doing a damn thing. You know why, you got everything but what it takes. You don't have the money and you won't get the money because by time the cowboy gets through up there, you know, fooling with these Arabs the first program that's going to go your coastline. It's not that important. You got good intentions. I remember when Sue started. You weren't a bad looking lady and I hope you're around another fifty years. In another fifty years there will probably be another thirty-five or forty groups just like you.

We appreciate everything you're trying to do but, we need help. We don't need studies and we don't need talking.

JON PORTHOUSE:

I think I need to try and take a stab at something. One (Inaudible) We have a number of things going on now that we haven't had in the past.

I understand your frustration, but this is the way we're going to get this thing on going. (Inaudible)

SUE HAWES:

I've been living in this country all my life and I really believe in democracy. You said we don't have the funding and we won't get it. Well, as a citizen living in New Orleans I can say as a citizen I can write my congressman and ask for money.

You can work with your local officials and congressman (Inaudible)

ROBIN DUNKIN:

I think we have time for one more question.

GENEVA GRILLE:

Geneva Grille, State of Louisiana,  
Department of Transportation and Development, also a  
resident of Belle Chasse which will soon be the delta  
of Plaquemines Parish. Plaquemines is no longer a  
peninsula, it's like a skeleton. It's scary. They  
raise the highways down here. We have loss of



wetlands. Our levee systems are hardly competent anymore to protect our home and our lives. We have to have the protection and restoration of the coast. We have to have barriers out there quickly. I concur with Benny Rouselle. Get something out there quick.

Do not study it forever. Our hurricane levees can take a major hurricane anymore. They are losing elevation faster than we can build it. You all know that by now. We nearly got overwhelmed with Isidore and Lili down here. That's a minor storm. Dealing with the coast and 2050 people wanted to believed that we understand. We understand there's a seafood industry, but, also there's got to be fair litigation in the State of Louisiana that has got to be equitable not where the people who are also involved with the litigation are making it impossible with these awards to restore our coastline and to reclaim our parishes. We can not go on with Louisiana politics and awards like the have happened in the past because you can't make the rest of the country believe it. If we have billion dollar awards and litigation. Fair, yes, unreasonable, no because it's going to affect everyone. It's going to affect your flood insurance. It's going to affect your lives. Most people that live down here the best thing they have is your property. When you can get flood insurance to protect your property, no one can live

down here and be safe. Everyone has to be in this together. We can't be raising the highways three and four feet. There's got to be a better solution like the barriers. Otherwise, the bottom part of Louisiana is going to be north of I-12. We can't live here anymore. There's going to be places we can't afford to even keep.

SUE HAWES:

As far as the state executives, we talked to them about the Louisiana coastal area and at the end of the day they said they thought we had a really good plan but then they have gotten President Rouselle cause they said we want to know what will help you right now. This is a great plan and even if you get the first things on the ground in four or five years, we want to know what will be on the ground next year, this year. So, there is concern out there. People do share the feelings that I'm hearing from you guys.

ROBIN DUNKIN:

Thank you. We're going to be going on to the next presentation that's going to be given by Sue Hawes.

(Whereupon, the presentation was given off the record.)

DOUG Hemel (Phonetic):

I'm Doug Hemel. I work the Mississippi

River Basin Outlets in New Orleans and supporter of restoration for a number of years. I have a few questions and concerns in terms of what the LCA is going to tell us and some things that I feel that we need to make sure that across the country -- You know a lot of times this endeavor is compared to the everglades on a similar type in terms as scale and there's a lot of activities that go on here which are different from Florida. At the same time though there are things that are still going on which other people in other parts of the country are going to look at and have questions about and in some cases I don't know if we'll have the answers for them. There are activities that are still going on which seem inconsistent with the general restoration sustainability that we're going to have to deal with.

One of the most obvious examples though is the amount of wetland in Louisiana. It's a pretty breathtaking. I've heard it said the numbers of acres that have been developed compared to the number of acres that have been lost. The land loss is bigger. The last I heard a few years ago and something like losing two to three thousand acres a year to development and we're losing about 20,000 acres a year to coastal land lost. So this is something that we're going to have to deal with because not only is this a national concern but just practical too. The

changes we're talking about happening (Inaudible) massive development towards the Gulf. The Gulf is coming north because of sea-level rise and land loss.

We are really laying ground work for some serious problems and it's not going to be easy to deal with this. But we're going to have to deal with it. And I hope that the LCA perhaps will have more of an impact part of it and I hope that they deal with those things because we're going to have to really be clear with the rest of the country. So I hope that that's something the study will address.

JON PORTHOUSE:

In fact, they already have asked us in some instances and we are working to address this. Just one quick point. It's true that in the past we were in the several thousand acres permanent wetland loss and through the implementation of our wetland permanent program through the state, increase coordination with the Corps we have reduced that down into just a couple of hundreds. There's more work to be done obviously, but, we have been asked and we have been put on notice.

ROBIN DUNKIN:

Thank you. Dennis?

DENNIS JONES:

My name is Dennis Jones-

HAWES:

Wait, LCA is definitely consistency between rebuilding the land and permits. We have in place a much closer coordination between the co-locating team that's working on coastal restoration and our permit section. We're looking at that very hard and making sure we know when permits come up in areas we are considering for restoration and in turn that they know we are considering restoration in an area where a permit might be.

DENNIS JONES:

My name is Dennis Jones. I'm a professional archeologist. I've done work for the Department of Environmental consulting, for the Army Corps, the New Orleans districts, and a host of other agencies and as well as the private sector and I guess I'll have a question of information first. There was a list in the first presentation of a sort of an environmental technical reports that had to be done for all of this. Have they been done yet or what's the status of those?

JON PORTHOUSE:

They are in progress right now. As you all know, when we do something that actually goes for a complete authorization of funding we have to have basically everything documented including all available archeological sites there that may be out there documented and covered if necessary. Right now

we're not so much doing that level of work because again we don't know exactly where these actuaries are going to be but we are sort of going through the existing data, the existing surveys that have been done and quantifying and characterizing most to the best we can.

DENNIS JONES:

That leads to my next concern which is more technical and I'm not a resident of this parish, but I have seen as an archeologist and I'm sure people here that are residents and have been out in the marsh knows archeology sites where they are and have seen as I have that they are being lost just as well as the land itself and these are irreplaceable records of the earliest inhabitants of this parish and all the coastal parishes of Louisiana and once they're gone you can't get them back and there is evidence of people that have been here for thousands of years and a variety of activity and a variety of sites and I guess my biggest concern and question and I don't know if you have an answer is if you have a site that is subsiding and is going down slowly and the weight of the subsidence has increased because of the land loss and erosion. If you pump a great deal of sediment into this area it will essentially, as far as I can visualize bury a site and new settling and thereby increase subsidence. The loss of the

information and as speaking as an archeologist we would like to get would be gone or its potential for battery recovery to get information about the earliest inhabitants of this area would be the rate of loss would be increased. Is this sort of thing being considered and do you have estimates of what would have to archeology site.

JON PORTHOUSE:

This things will be considered once we get to the point where we know we are going to have action. We don't have that particular person with us tonight but Bill Klein is our Environmental Impact Statement Manager on this project. He will be able to fill you in directly on exactly what were doing, where were doing it. He might even be able to put you in contact with the Corps' archeologist.

DENNIS JONES:

I have been in contact and have worked with them on and off for years. They won't know or can't tell obviously until specific locations and potential impact are planned by you folks. I just want to make, let everyone here know that before any plan is specific, specific plan is inactive you have to have these technical reports and that, it's been my experience working for a number of government agencies but the most definitely with the Corps of Engineers it turns into a very lengthy process and

whatever strategy you might want to adopt having these technical reports not for just archeology but for all the environmental concerns can take a long time unless there's some sort of expedited review process. I hope everybody understands that if a plan is picked it's not going to be begun the next year without these -- by law the Corps of Engineers is necessary for them to consider these things.

SUE HAWES:

First of all, your concern about losing sites because of subsidence is very valid. I can speak about one project because they started working on the project and getting details they discovered there was an archeological site on one of the old riggers out there and they have been tweaking the project so they can protect that site. We take it into consideration and I foresee that sort of thing happening in the LCA and also we recognize that it's a lengthy process. The environmental documentation takes a while but we're trying to figure any shortcuts we can but you still have certain things that have to be done legally.

CARLTON Dufrasheaux (phonetic):

Carlton Dufrasheaux with the Pontchartrain Basin Foundation. I compliment certainly the Department of Natural Resources, the Corps of



Engineers for the project that you take here is monumental undertaking as large if not larger than leveeing the Mississippi River. To achieve that, to preserve what we have left of the coast and try to restore it we need support on a national level. Certainly I compliment everyone in the audience for participating by coming out and attempting to let your opinions be known and simply allowing your elected officials know your feelings. The major concern I have and the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation has and we've voiced already is if we are serious, sincerely serious about restoring and preserving the coast of Louisiana we can't not address certain issues because there is -- Are there any representatives of navigation in the audience this evening, from shipping, the Port of New Orleans? I would suggest that the reason the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet is not in LCA is because the Port of New Orleans, the shipping industry still want the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet open and that's fine and I recognize the economic potential of the outlet. However, if we sincerely want to preserve the coast we've got to -- if the 2050 plan is the foundation for the LCA, the 2050 plan is going to close the MRGO keystone strategy, whatever, we have to indicate that the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet is the number one thing to address. If we don't do that we're not

going to have the consensus of the Pontchartrain Basin and unfortunately I would suggest, more than suggest, I fear that we will never have a strong support on the coast. I recognize what has been said earlier about the ongoing process the Corps of Engineers, the EPA. However, that can't be (Inaudible) and this process right now we more than urge. We have to state the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet will be phased out. If we don't do that we will never have a consensus. If that doesn't happen we're going to have a fatal flaw in the entire system.

JON PORTHOUSE:

That's an excellent point. When she said it wasn't in the LCA study, I think she just meant that we as a study team were not doing and additional work on it. All the things that are going on other studies and efforts within the Corps, within the state which are consistent and under basically an umbrella of this comprehensive plan will be rolled in and included in the report as much as we possible can.

CARLTON Dufrasheaux:

May I suggest you to please state publicly that the Mississippi River phase out or closing, whatever terminology used, is in the 2050 plan be incorporated in the LCA. That language be phased out

is critically. Otherwise, we are going to have a very big gap in Pontchartrain. Thank you.

Sue HAWES:

I can speak for the Corps. We will definitely look at the possibility of that. I mean, we haven't -- We've never done a study like this and I certainly understand the point and we will incorporate doing wherever the Corps and EPA are, we'll incorporate that into the 2050.

CARLTON DUFRASHEAUX:

I'm sorry. I appreciate what you said. However, 2050 process said and this the State of Louisiana unless I'm incorrect and please correct me if I'm wrong, the State of Louisiana endorses the phasing out of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet. What we're saying now by getting the MRGO out implies that there is another question. Either the MRGO is going to stay open. That implication alone is enough to sink what you are trying to do right now. It's very noble, I might add. I don't mean to be -- I mean to be pro-active and this recommendation to you.

If we do not state that the MRGO is the problem and it will be addressed, we are going to sink ourselves and this process. I strongly suggest that the MRGO phase out be included in the LCA. Thank you.

ROBIN DUNKIN:

Woody Cruz is still here?

THE AUDIENCE:

No.

ROBIN DUNKIN:

Alright, you can go ahead. Don't forget we need your name, your affiliation and we would like to know where you are from.

PATRICK LANDRY:

My name is Patrick Landry, affiliation is I'm a concerned citizen, a homeowner in Louisiana, a taxpayer. There's something I've been curious about is obviously we're looking for the most cost efficient, time efficient method of stopping erosion. I do think to try to dredge various areas that's something that should be put back later but what I'm curious to know has any thoughts been given to driving sheet piles on the longitudinal east west pass in most cases where for example if you look at the levees and flood walls all around that area. One of the primary construction methods used in those levees is simply putting steel piles a couple of hundred feet into the ground and build a wall and the rest of levee built around. Obviously building a complete levee along the whole southern Louisiana would be, the cost for that would be outrageous but to merely drive sheet pile into the ground like thousand yard sections of them. Obviously you have to take into consideration navigational and with all

due respect the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet is just one small portion of the whole erosion issue. So, once again has any thought been put into driving sheet piles. It's been in the paper recently that the Bayou Steel is going bankrupt. Well, it would seem to me if we had Bayou Steel, a local steel manufacture, produce sheet piles in mass quantities would people back to work and would be a very cost efficient method of simply just running straight lines of piles to stop the erosion. Has any thought been given to that?

JON PORTHOUSE:

Not just in the LCA but in QUIPA (phonetic) and in certain other programs. Measures like sheet pile or rock certain are applicable in some instances. And, there are instances where it will solve the entire problem. But, however, there are also instances where it will not solve the entire problem and in some cases may even cause a problem beyond what you put the sheet piling to protect. So, we are looking at in areas where it is appropriate. But, we are also looking at really things to get the whole problem tacked. So, there are some smaller areas at this point where we are looking at sheet piles or rip-rock protection on some navigation channels and lake shoreline, things like that. It is being considered.

PATRICK LANDRY:

It just seems to be a very cost efficient investment.

SUE HAWES:

One problem is it's cost efficient for a little bit but the sheet pile is expensive and has to be driven like you said very deeply and it can cause more problems than it solves. But, we definitely will consider it because we got to look at all the alternatives.

MARK DAVIS:

Mark Davis again. We are finally talking about doing something on a comprehensive basis. But I'm also concerned that we are not where we need to be at this stage of the game. That I'm not certain giving the schedule you have set for this how you plan to truly develop the restoration targets. You decide whether the aggressive strategies are truly available. Before we even get around to picking a recommended strategy there has to be a broad consensus as to what the permanent outcome will be. Whether we picking strategies to gain land, keep what we have, (Inaudible) Also I didn't see any discussion on what the program management plan is going to be. Science and engineering are only half of this. We do not have a management structure that is designed to

take us beyond the authorization into implementation and use credible. We need a program management plan that also builds in the consistency with other coastal activities whether it be regulatory levee building, road construction, navigational port. We're not where we need to be. I'd also suggest that we all have to keep in mind that as easy as it is to walk up to the microphone and tell you what I believe is the truth, which is we're not going to be and I don't see it yet a game plan for getting there. That is the responsibility of those of us in the coastal communities to not only be a catalyst for that and also be a purpose. I do believe that Sue Hawes got it right that if we do not find a way to do this, an incredible, accountable way, we are endorsing no action. While it's easy to say we don't want anymore studies, let's just do it. This is the process. This is the vehicle for getting that investment whether it's in the State of Louisiana or this nation. We don't have very many more chances to do this. In fact, I would suggest for all practical purposes this is our last best chance. So I really would encourage not only the members of the planning group to raise their sites to challenge the authorities they work under and the agencies they work with, but I also challenge each member of the audience to continue what they are doing here tonight

and that is to find a way to make this work because it's going to take a lot of work and it's not going to be easy and it's not always going to be pretty. There's going to be conflict. We can kid ourselves into thinking that this is going to be a national consensus that will merge in the next four to eight months. That won't happen. This is a beginning. We didn't get into this mess overnight and we're not getting out easily. And nobody is out there waiting to adopt this cause if we don't do it first.

JON PORTHOUSE:

Those are all good points, Mark. Two things I'd like to say. I've already mentioned the first thing tonight that one of the things we're trying to do is orient you to the process and what we are trying to accomplish. But I've also freely admitted that we don't have all the answers right now. We are in the process of developing our evaluation tools so that these different approaches that Sue's gone through so, the next time we come out here we will actually be able to tell you, give you a better idea of what sort of issues are involved. For instance, if in one basin that we decide that we rather rely on dedicated dredging and smaller reintroductions. Well, that's a very different outcome that you would get if you would put in large number diversions. But, until you quantify the



differences of the affects between those plans, we can't really go about getting a consensus because we can't tell you what the trade offs are going to be. So, over the next few months we are going to be working on those issues.

Regarding the program management, Mark, again, always makes an excellent point. That was a one single bullet on one of my slides was one of the things we have to have in this report is program management. Obviously, we have to have a way -- The multibillion dollar restoration program is not going to implement itself. We have to have a way to receive the money in an appropriate way, spend in accordance with the plan, get the projects on the ground quickly. We have just now hired contractors with national experience in large programs in California, in Florida on the LA everglades to help us work through these issues. They are going to begin their work in a couple of weeks but, it will be a central portion of this plan, implementing a program management strategy that we can really assure the rest of the country that this thing, that this program will be implemented appropriately and do lots of good things like we all know it will do.

SUE HAWSER:

I'd like to say that someone mentioned the Governor's Commission, well, I think that is going to

be a big help because it represents all the varying interest and one of their jobs is going to be as we find out the things Jon has told you, what the actually impacts of doing this here are. And, you know, if you can maybe get a vote just cutting the loss in half. When we get those fact and we find out what the big diversion is could be from oysters to navigation, all these things, then the Governor's Commission is aligned with all these people they can talk about it. They can get back with their constituent groups and get some consensus. We can come to the public and get some consensus. But, right now we just have some generic approaches. We got some ideas but, they are not anywhere near close enough -- I mean, we can't tell much tonight other than where we've been, where we're going to go and that we really believe, you know, we've got people working long hours trying to get us there. And, the one thing that really works is that everybody cares.

You care as citizens, we care as citizens. We're working this hard because, you know, I've been here thirty-five years, this is my home. I've got kids and grandkids raised here and so I want a restored coast for them to live in and so does everybody else that's working on this.

ERNEST WOOTEN:

Ernest Wooten. I'm state representative

for District 105. My district incorporates a hundred percent of Plaquemines Parish, Barataria, Lafitte, Crown Point in Jefferson and part of LaFourche and if Hurricane Lilly hadn't taken a little turn in the late summer, I wouldn't have a district. I would not have a district. People on the Northshore when Isidore came put, you know, six or seven feet of water in Mandeville. Their eyes were opened. I'm on a barrier island. I'm like Mr. Rouselle, until we have some barrier island to keep the Gulf out, my opinion we're going no where. But, I want to give you a hypothet real fast. It's tomorrow morning and you wake up and we have fourteen billion dollars, when can I expect to see results not something started, we've started. Your first slide, Jon, 1965 was the inception of Davis Bond (phonetic) it opened last year. That's thirty-seven years. You know where Plaquemines Parish is going to be in thirty-seven years if something is not done. I appreciate what you're doing or trying to do. Really, what can I expect if I had fourteen billion dollars given to coastal restoration today.

JON PORTHOUSE:

I will add to that what if. If we got the fourteen billion dollars and we had the necessary resources in terms of people because it's going to take a lot of incredibly technical and skilled people

to do this. If we had that and we had some feasibility studies in progress, we're talking a matter of a couple of years for some projects. Some are obviously going to take longer, they are going to be more complex, the effects are going to be more far-reaching. They will still take a couple of years. The slide I put up is a little bit misleading. It said in 1965 was authorized Davis, Palm and Canarvin (phonetic). There are a few decades there where it just wasn't even funded on the federal level until the state put up twenty-five percent of the money to really get that process moving. Once that happened those projects started to get on the ground within five years and those were pretty big projects.

ERNEST WOOTEN:

You need to change slides.

JON PORTHOUSE:

I actually meant to explain that but, you know, in my mind I forgot to do it and I apologize for that.

SUE HAWES:

He said what I was going to say. We don't have the fourteen billion dollars. We need to get it and we need a good plan to get it.

BOB THOMAS:

I'm Bob Thomas and I'm a professor at Loyola University. Like a lot of people in the room I've been working on this issue for a good twenty-five years. We obviously care very deeply. I have a question -- Let me give you my questions first. My question is how are you going to assure that the public has input in this process. We've all been to a lot of these public meeting. We all trying to do everything we can here, but using the old tried and true techniques of having a public hearing, whether it's something in the paper that list four different places and then expecting people to show up. We've been to most of these public hearings and I'm not faulting you, I'm not faulting the people who necessarily didn't come. That's just a fact of life. If we follow the normal processes of trying to include the public, we will fail desperately. A special time requires special techniques and I would request that you all rehuddle and think about how you're going to actually engage the public in this process. This is the most monumental thing that's happened to this land since the Louisiana Purchase and certainly in terms of environmental and human interactions, this is it. Nothing closer as ever been done. Worse case scenario that we like to throw around is, we go to the worse case scenario we'll have to move -- It's never happened to humanity,

ever, anywhere. You would have to in a relative short period of time move that many people, which means give them jobs and set up a whole new system for these people. But we've got to come up with a newer technique, a better technique of communicating with the public and energizing them to come out and engage themselves in this. They're not going to come to public hearings, we know that. I'm also very concerned that nobody gave it a thought -- Well, I'll assume you gave it thought, but we are not holding more meetings in the middle of New Orleans. New Orleans is a poor city with a lot of poverty. Nobody in the inner cities would show up at a meeting like this even this close. Yet, the projections are in a worse case scenario a hurricane and 100,000 body bags would not be enough in the City of New Orleans and those people are directly affected by this but they are not going to show up at a meeting. So my question getting back to it is what do we, how do we really bring the people into this process so that when you sit down to make decisions you're really speaking to the people of Louisiana?

JON PORTHOUSE:

That's a big question and honestly we get that everywhere we go so we should have a good answer for you. The halfway answer is we understand that

this tonight was just a start. It's a way to get -- most times we do get new people and we're really hoping that happens. One of the ways we can really make sure this whole effort is successful is by working with you and that's one of the reasons we asked the question, "Is this an appropriate place, should we meet somewhere else". Another question we always ask cause we need your help is what is the best way to communicate with the public. We know what we do, press releases, we call a few reporters, we put some announcements on the WEB. In certain instances we go on TV shows or radio shows. But, what is the best way to reach the public. Some of these methods we've tried before we're going to keep trying because some of them work. But, some of these things we just honestly haven't thought of. We need help from you to make sure we reach the public. As far as making the public input we do receive part of the study. The only thing I can say is just by being here we have a court reporter who is taking all these comments. We take ever comment seriously. Most of these comments will go directly to the study team for consideration. We are still kicking around again, obviously, how to better communicate with the public.

Are we going to put sort of a digestion of this meeting on the Internet for the people who couldn't make it to see how we responded to those questions.

We haven't really done that yet. It's on the agenda to do over the next few weeks but we didn't want to wait until that was done before we started coming out to the public. I know it's half an answer but, we are really looking for you guys to help us out; what is the best way, what is the best place to reach you.

ROBIN DUNKIN:

Okay, we have enough time for about two more questions and if you were not able to ask a question or comment Sue and Jon are both staying after the meeting so you can ask them directly. So let's take two more questions before we wrap.

PAUL ANGRISANA:

When I told Scott what I was going to say he said I should do it up here. I told the lady when I came here I would do something. So this is what my organization will do. I would invite the Corps of Engineers or groups like this to a lunch at the Chef Table (phonetic) Restaurant on St. Charles Avenue, 10 to 12 people, 10 to 15 people and from that you will be able to form a list of 100 to 150 people that we can have cakes and pastries and tea on St. Charles Avenue at the Chef Table Restaurant and we will create a three to five minute tape that will air at least 28 times on PBS station. I'll send it around the country. I can't guarantee where around the country it will air but, it will air in New Orleans.



You have a lot of people here talking tonight. What makes this country do what it does is if you do something. If you can afford to write a letter then you should leave here tonight and write a letter. If you can do what I did or something like it, do that.

I'll invite you all to a lunch but I want to do it soon. We do quickly. You tell me what your agenda is and then form that list of 100 to 150 people and then from that let's see how many other groups like that we can create and we'll put it on TV. Three to five minutes but, I want a concise absolute, this is what we're talking about and tell the people on TV.

JON PORTHOUSE:

We certainly appreciate the offer and that's the sort of thing we're trying to get from you guys, what is the best way to work with you to get the word out and get the participation. So, don't go away we're going to talk to you before we leave tonight.

ROBIN DUNKIN:

Do we have one more question?

KERRY ST. PE:

Hello again, Kerry St. Pe. I come to these meetings and I say the same thing as Mark. The absolute ultimate importance of public involvement and this team is a component. Before you get to

this you need to have people that represent these groups, industry and transportation. Those are the people that are actually the working people sit on the committees and help tell you where -- You know that will watch and won't lobby against. I was born and raised in Plaquemines Parish. I have two brothers who still live here. I have ties to this parish. This parish is terrible trouble. The Barataria systems is the fastest eroding system in this state and although we was looking at this, I think it always has been. You need these people involved in the process. This part of it. You need to come and tell these people this is what we're thinking, what are you willing to accept. But, you've got to have the set toward that. You've got to have them involved in the process. This is what we're willing to accept. We're willing to accept biological diversity, enough will be awarded that we can entertain the system and create marsh and still maintain biological diversity. We're the reason for our own success. We cannot keep ignoring what we've already learned and starting over. Everyone is tired of that. I'm tired of that and I'm part of the government. I've been trying to understand most everything that's been presented here tonight. I know there are people here who really don't. We're all frustrated even the people who work with me.

There are no more passionate people that are trying to do something for this coast than the people that are working. It's just that we all have to learn when we look at past successes and continue, don't ignore them. Use what was learned. Stop and look at what was done right and continue. Use it to enhance and do even better than before.

JON PORTHOUSE:

Thanks, Kerry. I would hope that we are doing that because we understand that, you know, if we're trying to get a report to congress by July of 2004 we don't have time to reinvent any wheels. We don't want to anyway, it's too much work. If it's out there and it works, we would like to use it. So, again, Kerry you point about making sure people really understand what's going in is well taken and we will continue to work with you to refine these things.

Some of you don't know this, we went out to address Barataria Terrebonne National Estuary Program a couple of weeks ago cause we knew we were coming here tonight and we wanted to make sure the presentation told people what it needed to say in a way that would be, you know, how they needed to hear it. This presentation you saw here tonight is dramatically different based on our communications with Kerry. So, were not talking public

participation, it is not just tell us what you think, tell us what you want to see. Some of it is as basic as attending a meeting, part of a group, helping us work these presentations out to make sure we're answering the right questions when we come out to the larger public. We certainly appreciate Kerry and getting that program and allowing us to do that and we look for more opportunities for that as we can.

ROBIN DUNKIN:

Thank you, Jon. I'd want to remind everyone a few things that Jon mentioned in his presentations about input. First, I want to remind everyone about the self-addressed stamped envelope that's in the back, it's a comment card. If you were not able to make any comments tonight you still can write on that comment card, mail it in and it will still get to the proper folks. Another thing I want to remind you is to visit the website, [www.Coast2050.gov](http://www.Coast2050.gov). It has frequently asked questions. I has a copy of tonight's both presentations that are on the website tonight and that's another place where you can submit online questions and comments. Also, it's important for you to be on the mailing list. There is a mailing list card towards the back. So we ask that you please make sure you are on the mailing list. He also mentioned attending more of these public meetings

which are going to happen again in April and May as well as we'd like to know was this the best place to have it. Is this the best outlet? Do you have suggestions on how to communicate better and more effectively with people. So before you leave, on behalf of the Governor's office and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources and the Army Corps of Engineers, we thank you for coming tonight and we're going to take a lot of this information process it and do something with it. So we thank you for your participation. Thank you.

\* \* \* \* \*

(Whereupon, the meeting ended at 8:42 p.m.)

R E P O R T E R ' S P A G E

I, DOROTHY N. GROS, Certified Court Reporter in and for the State of Louisiana, the officer, as defined in Rule 28 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and/or Article 1434(B) of the Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure, before who this sworn testimony was taken, do hereby state on the

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DOROTHY N. GROS, CCR

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I, Dorothy N. Gros, Certified Court Reporter, in and for the State of Louisiana, authorized by the laws of said State to administer oaths and to take the depositions of witnesses, hereby certify that the foregoing matter was taken before me at the time and place herein above stated; the matter being reported by me and thereafter

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I further certify that I am not of counsel nor related to any of the parties to this cause, and that I am in no wise interested in the result of said cause.

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